

# Stories of the Pirates

By JOHN L. WHITE

**T**ALES of Captain Kidd, who plied his pirate calling from New York Sound to the Gulf, and stories of other sea rovers who are also supposed to have buried chests of gold and jewels along the shore, have set thousands to digging from time immemorial. There are, in fact, few coast towns from Maine to Florida that cannot point to a spot where some dreamer has made a hole in search of pirate gold. Mount Desert (Maine), Marthas Vineyard, New London, Narragansett Bay, Nantucket, Newburyport, Salem, in fact, all towns along the coast, have their traditions of vast sums of hidden treasure that is buried beneath them. All that is needed is to find the right spot.

Hardly less famous than Captain Kidd was the daring Captain Teach, known in song and story as "Blackbeard," a veritable Bluebeard, with a wife in every port, and in some ports two or three. And with him were that bloody pair, daring Edward England and One-Eyed

Charlie Vane. The three together carried on illicit trade along the Carolina coast. There are many others besides who worked along the Atlantic coast and about the gulf, burying their ill-gotten wealth along the shores where thriving communities have since grown up. The entire coast-line is probably pitted with buried treasure which lies where it was put for safe-keeping so long ago.

Thomas Tew, Captain Avery, John Halsey (a Bostonian, by the way), Captain Condent, Captain Bellamy, Peggy Williams, Captain Lewis, Sam Burgess, Tom Howard, and Captain Fly were at one time names to conjure with. They still play leading rôles in stories dealing with buried treasure along the coast of New England and along the seaboard to the gulf. They were all rich, and tales of their grim deeds fill volumes.

## Robbed the King's Own

**I**T is told of Captain Avery, one of the boldest of the early buccaneers, that he once overtook a ship heavily laden with royal treasure sailing under the flag of the Great Mogul. The great King's daughter herself was aboard on a pilgrimage to Mecca. But Captain Avery was no respecter of persons; so he relieved the ship of its precious cargo which later he deposited at several points along the New England coast. Strange to say, no trace of this wealth has ever been found.

Captain Tew led a pirate's adventurous life for many years, but finally decided to forsake the high seas for a respectable career on land. So, after an exceptionally big strike, Tew forsook his mates at Madagascar, and with his share of the spoils went to live in Rhode Island. Part of his fortune is thought to be buried somewhere about Providence.

Long Island, too, has its tales and traditions of hidden wealth. Here there were the dens and meeting places of many of the most notorious of these sea rovers. Some of the hardiest even dared to lurk within a few miles of Boston. There Captain Fly met his fate, and on a beautiful July morning in 1726 was hanged at the entrance of Boston Harbor amid great festivities and rejoicing. Near this spot is an ideal place for a pirate's home. An inlet from Charles Bay winds several miles inland, running along the side of a dark and beautiful grove, where much of Captain Kidd's treasure is supposed to lie buried.

The name of one pirate at least, had he followed a saner path, might now be known to the political



student. Caraccioli, who sailed with Captain Mission on the ship *Victorie*, was a real political genius. He organized the crew into a body politic, with Mission as lord conservator. This organized band swooped down upon their unsuspecting prey in all quarters of the globe, accumulating wealth to the amount of millions. All died in their boots, annihilated in a conflict with the Great Mogul's ships.

All these pirates were monsters of cruelty; but there were some not entirely heartless. Thomas White on one occasion overtook a ship captained by Benjamin Stacy. After relieving the ship of its cargo, this gentle pirate's eyes fell upon two children crying as if their little hearts would break. Upon inquiry, he was informed that eight hundred dollars of the booty belonged to the children. It was all they had in the world. In a short speech to his men the pirate urged that it was cruel to rob innocent children,

and at once gave orders to replace the entire cargo, and then he added two hundred dollars for the children and went on his quest for another victim.

## The Terror of the Gulf

**D**ON PEDRO GILBERT, Captain Sir Henry Morgan, Bernarde de Soto, Sir Francis Drake, and Captain William Dampier are names linked with tales of hidden gold about the Gulf of Mexico. The most notorious buccaneer in the vicinity of the gulf, however, was Jean Lafitte, called "The Terror of the Gulf of Mexico." There are conflicting accounts of Lafitte. Some believe him to have been a gentleman in manners and in breeding, and that he forsook the life of a law-abiding citizen for a blood-thirsty career; that he was once a captain in Bonaparte's army and taught fashionable fencing classes in New Orleans.

Others would make out Lafitte to have been a blacksmith on Phillips-st., who was shrewd enough to direct a band of pirates without injuring his reputation in the community. Whatever the facts may have been, there is good proof that Lafitte led a Jekyll and Hyde life and was the leader of one of the most notorious piratical bands in history. He was an odd character, a man of remarkable courage and nautical ability. His heroic participation in the battle of New Orleans, resulting in his commendation by the President and General Jackson, is well known.

## This Pirate Was Fond of Society

**G**OLD bars of great value, together with war implements, have been discovered among the islands of Baratavia, where the headquarters of Lafitte's gang is supposed to have been. It is probable that more treasure is concealed elsewhere, for Lafitte's men were all rich. He is said to have one time spent sixty thousand dollars in his entertainment



of fashionable society during a brief stay in Washington.

One of the most interesting links of history connecting the Virginia of to-day with that of historic times is found in a story of an old colonial homestead in the neighborhood of Jamestown. The house is still standing, and is occupied by a wealthy planter. It is about five miles from the sea-coast. There is an enormous stone tower at one corner of the house, dating back to 1700. An underground passage has been discovered leading from the tower to the sea. It is supposed that buccaneers had their rendezvous in the old tower and the passage was a means of secretly transferring booty from their ships to a place of safety. The owner of the house will not permit the walls of the tower to be destroyed or broken into, for fear that some explosive machine is hidden within. He scoffs at all suggestions of his neighbors that there may be treasure hidden there.

Among the first tales that a new-comer into a certain region of Mexico hears, concerns a

band of Franciscan friars who established a monastery near Las Cruces, New Mexico, early in the seventeenth century. The name given the monastery was Cibollo. A vineyard was cultivated, and the little colony flourished. Two small gold mines were discovered. The Indians mined the ore while their robed friends refined it. All went well until about 1630, when a cruel governor, said to have been a descendant from Cortés by an Indian wife, assumed government of the territory. There was an Indian uprising, and after many bitter conflicts with the savages the Spaniards were driven out. The monks became alarmed lest they might next be the victims of the redskins, and decided to leave the country. Loading their gold in two big wagons, they set out for the South, accompanied by a score of faithful redskins.

## Fire Destroyed the Marks

**U**PON reaching Northern Mexico the little company was attacked by a tribe of hostile Apaches. The gold hindered progress, and after deliberation it was decided to bury it. The wagons were burned to mark the place. The friars and their Indian allies then hurried on to the City of Mexico, at that time a trading post. When New Mexico was reconquered by Spain, the Cibollo monks who survived sought the region of their hidden treasure. A prairie fire, however, had laid waste the country. All traces of the buried wealth had been swept away. The ruins of the old Cibollo are still standing. It is believed that the gold is buried somewhere about Juarez, Mexico, and even to this day numbers of parties may occasionally be seen earnestly searching for the treasure.

In 1840 or thereabouts some filibusters under one Captain Crabb invaded Mexico. They secured considerable treasure and laid plans to attack the settlement of Carborca. Prior to the siege the band buried their gold. The inhabitants of Carborca sought refuge in an old Jesuit church, the ruins of which may still be seen. The filibusters were surprised and badly defeated. Only one of them escaped, a mere boy, who was voluntarily released. There is a story current to the effect that about ten years ago the boy, now an old man, returned to the scene of the fight, dug up the gold and disappeared. The truth of this is questioned by the incredulous, but many of the older inhabitants stoutly affirm that the

